

Child and Family Services



December 2006

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This newsletter, specific staff contact information for OCFS staff, and other important information is available on the Office of Child and Family Services webpage at:
<http://www.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov/CFS-default.htm>

Legislative Updates Related to Children and Families

State Level Initiatives for 2007

HJR 96

The General Assembly passed a resolution, HJR 96, encouraging the Board and the Department of Education and the Board and the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services and other relevant entities to take certain actions to improve the education and treatment of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. The Board and the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services are urged to continue to expand

training opportunities that include approaches specifically addressing the needs of children with autism spectrum disorders. DMHMRSAS established a workgroup to address training opportunities for children with autism spectrum disorders served by CSBs. As part of this effort, DMHMRSAS is engaged in a collaborative training initiative of the Autism Priority Project, the Early Childhood Priority Project, and T-TACs, to 1) plan and host a one-day statewide training conducted by a nationally known consultant who will present on autism in community settings. The training will be at an advanced level and the targeted age group for this project will be early childhood providers. Participation in the one-day statewide training will require post-training expectations including participation in regional “communities of practice”. Other post training activities will include the national consultant meeting with the community of practice leaders to facilitate establishment of six regional communities of practice. The opportunity to offer this training and to develop and implement communities of practice in Autism will contribute to the skills of professionals for effectively meeting the needs of children with these disorders.

SB 737

This bill repeals the current law which provides that in any case in which custody or visitation of a child is at issue, the mental health records concerning a parent shall be privileged and confidential and the mental health care provider may not be required to testify on behalf of or against a parent or any of the parent's adult relatives.

SB 738

This bill clarifies that retired judges, substitute judges, and special justices are authorized to

perform hearings under the Act and to receive compensation therefore.

SB 739

This bill clarifies that retired judges, substitute judges, and special justices are authorized to perform hearings under the Act. This bill also authorizes the chief judge of the 2nd Judicial Circuit (Virginia Beach, Northampton, and Accomack) and the chief judge of the 19th Judicial Circuit (Fairfax County) to appoint special justices for the purpose of performing duties required of a judge under this Act. Such appointed judges are to be paid by the locality in which the special justice was appointed. This bill also states that an emergency exists and that, if approved and signed by the Governor, the bill shall go into effect upon its passage.

HB 657

The State Insurance Benefit Commission met Monday, November 20, 2006 to review the study on HB 657 that mandates benefits for children 0-19 years of age who need medically necessary habilitation services. DMHMRSAS would be responsible for certifying children for medically necessary habilitation services. The study recommended that this bill should not be reintroduced, as it is difficult to define the scope of services to be provided, that it is not financially prudent to fund, and that a mechanism is already in place to address the services included in the legislation.

Budget Requests for FY 2008

During the budget planning process, several preliminary budget requests submitted by the Office of Child and Family Services were approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the Governor's Budget to be presented in December 2007. DMHMRSAS will not know the status of the budget requests until the Governor's budget is made public in December.

Mental Health Law Reform Commission

The 26-member Commission on Mental Health Law Reform was appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of VA, Leroy Rountree Hassell,

Sr., on October, 2006. The Commission is chaired by Professor Richard J. Bonnie, Director of the Institute of Law, Psychiatry and Public Policy at the University of Virginia. Commission members include officials from all three branches of state government, as well as representatives of many private stakeholder groups, including consumers and families, service providers and attorneys. The charge is for the Commission to conduct a comprehensive examination of Virginia's mental health laws and services to study ways to use the law more effectively to serve the needs of people with mental illness, while respecting the interests of their families and communities. The Commission plans to complete its study and submit its final report in October, 2007.

The Commission has five task forces that will address access to services, involuntary civil commitment, consumer empowerment, children and adolescents and mental health and criminal justice systems.

The children's task force is chaired by Judge Deborah Paxson and Co-chaired by Charlotte McNulty. Shirley Ricks of DMHMRSAS and Sandy Bryant of the VACSB Child and Family Services Council serve on the task force for children. In addition to these two representatives, there are judges, attorneys, advocates, family members and staff of other child-serving agencies. The children's task force has three sub-groups that include:

- Juvenile Justice
- Involuntary Commitment
- Services and Custody Relinquishment

The sub-groups will be meeting individually to address system issues to bring to the full children's task force meeting on December 1.

The full Commission will meet on the following dates: December 8, (Charlottesville); March 15-16 2007 (Charlottesville); June 21-22, 2007 (Fredericksburg); and a date to be designated in October, 2007 (Richmond)

CSA Innovative Community Services Grants

The 2006 General Assembly provided \$250,000 for FY 2007 and \$500,000 for FY2008 in the Appropriations Act (*Item 279K*) for a community development infrastructure grant program to be managed by the Office of Comprehensive Services. The Act and budget amendment language state:

- “On a competitive basis, the director of CSA shall allocate funding for start-up costs to localities that are interested in developing community-based services for children and adolescents who are placed in out-of-community residential care or are at risk of such placement.”
- “Competitive, start-up funding to localities to create innovative, community-based services that will allow children and adolescents in the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) program to be served in local communities as opposed to high-cost, residential facilities outside of these localities.”
- “Services may include comprehensive assessments, behavioral aides, crisis intervention and stabilization services, family support, substance abuse services, school-based services, therapeutic day treatment and foster care, intensive in-home services, and respite care.”

The Office of Comprehensive Services has solicited proposals from Community Policy and Management Teams (CPMTs) established under the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA). One CPMT or a group of several CPMTs were eligible to submit a proposal.

The deadline for proposals was 5:00 pm EST on Wednesday, November 29, 2006. The anticipated start date is January 15, 2007. A collaborative panel will review the grant applications. The Office of Child and Family services will serve on this panel.

Study of an Office of Children’s Services Ombudsman

The DMHMRSAS Offices of Child and Family Services and Licensure continue to participate in the Commission on Youth’s study of the need for

an Office of Children’s Services Ombudsman. The study is examining the need for the office and, if the need exists, the appropriate functions of the office, how to avoid duplicating existing functions and how to fund such an office. The study group reviewed information presented by the Commission staff and debated numerous alternatives.

At the most recent meeting of the Commission on Youth on November 28th at 1 PM, the findings and recommendations of the advisory group were presented and the Commission voted to continue the study for an additional year to focus in detail on the multiple issues highlighted in the initial year of study. We will keep you informed as this important activity proceeds.

Medicaid

Just a reminder that the Medicaid provider manual on Community Mental Health Rehabilitative Services now makes clear that substance abuse services are covered when they are a part of an overall treatment plan for a person (adult or child) with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.

Targeted case management for children at risk of serious emotional disturbance includes **all** children who are at risk of serious emotional disturbance. There are many reasons a child may be at risk for serious emotional disturbance, including parental mental illness or substance abuse, abuse and neglect, the impact of other physical and mental disabilities, and others. It is important to document these risk factors in a child’s case record to assure appropriate Medicaid reimbursement.

All Medicaid provider manuals are available at: <http://www.dmas.virginia.gov> and represent the policy of the state Medicaid agency.

Child and Family Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee (330 F)

The Child and Family Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee has met monthly since submission of its annual report to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committee in June. For a complete version of the

report, please visit the Office of Child and Family Services web site. Deputy Commissioner Ray Ratke will attend the December 14, 2006 CFBHPPC for discussion on children's issues. The potential topics for his discussion will be DMHMRSAS vision for child and adolescent services, use of Medicaid to fund services for children and youth, how behavioral health connects to education, health care, etc. There will be opportunities for Q&A.

Mary Dunn Stewart of Voices for Virginia's Children and Vicki Hardy-Murrell of the Federation of Families recently met with Deputy Commissioner Ray Ratke. The discussion included how to better promote and advocate for the needs of children and the recommendations in the FY 2006 330-F report. This was a very successful meeting. Mary has made significant efforts to talk to legislators about the need of children and that Vicki is doing the same with families. Although no specific budget information is known at this time for children, there is support for children's services and the Governor's budget will determine what is in the budget to be funded for children's services.

Proposed VACSB Forum on Child and Family Services

The Office of Child and Family Services has been in contact with Mary Ann Bergeron to discuss VACSB having a quarterly meeting on Child and Family Services. It appears that there is interest in having this for the May forum. We will be discussing this more with Mary Ann and the Child and Family Council to work with OCFS and VACSB to make this an opportunity to promote children and family services. We will keep you abreast and involved in the discussion.

Child and Family Advisory Committee

The Child and Family Advisory Committee held its quarterly meeting on November 21, 2006. There was discussion about two grant opportunities from CMS regarding community based alternatives, Money Follows the Person and alternatives to psychiatric residential treatment centers. Committee members also heard updates about various projects and activities of the OCFS including but not limited to HJR 96; dealing with

autism, CSB Projects in Juvenile Detention Centers, the Governor's Early Childhood Initiative, System of Care/Evidence Based Practice Demonstration Projects, the Mental Health Block Grant and COSIG. The Office of Comprehensive Services reported on planning that is occurring for system of care rounds tables to be held statewide, utilizing OCS TA staff to facilitate planning to promote systems of care. The OCS is seeking funding for specific events will occur as a result of the round table sessions. The committee identified two priorities: 1) the adoption of a logo for the OCFS and adding a family page to the OCFS web site and linking the family page to community resources. The next quarterly meeting will be held in February 2007.

Early Intervention Update

Part C Annual Performance Report

In December 2005, Virginia submitted its State Performance Plan (SPP) to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in accordance with federal requirements in the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. That 2004 statute also requires states to annually report on state and local status with regard to the targets set for each of the indicators in the SPP. The first Annual Performance Report is due to the Office of Special Education Programs on February 1, 2007.

Public Hearings and Public Comment

The revised Commonwealth of Virginia (2007) Policies and Procedures for the Implementation of Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act will be made available for a 60-day public comment period beginning December 01, 2006 and concluding January 29, 2007. The revised Policies and Procedures can be found on the Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia website at www.infantva.org as of December 01, 2006. The finalized Policies and Procedures will be submitted to the Office of Special Education Services, along with the Part C Federal Application, in April 2007 for review and approval.

Public hearings will be held at two locations:

1. Richmond Area: January 11, 2007 from 1:00 PM-3:00 PM at the Henrico Area DMHMRSAS East Center (Room 23), 4825

South Laburnum Avenue, Richmond, Virginia; and

2. Southwest Virginia: January 18, 2007 from 1:00 PM-3:00 PM at New River Valley Community Services (New River Room), 700 University City Boulevard, Blacksburg, Virginia.

If interpreters are needed for the public hearings for individuals with hearing impairments, please contact Keisha White (804) 786-3710 keisha.white@co.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov, by December 26, 2006.

CSB Services in Juvenile Detention Centers

The Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) continues to provide funding for 14 community services boards for the provision of mental health screening, assessment services, and community based referrals for children in the local juvenile detention facility. Currently programs are in operation at:

- Alexandria CSB/Northern VA Detention Home
- Blue Ridge Behavioral Health/Roanoke Detention Center
- Colonial CSB/Merrimac Detention Center
- Danville CSB/W.W. Moore Detention Center
- New River Valley CSB/New River Valley Detention Home
- Region 10 CSB/Blue Ridge Detention Center
- Central Virginia CSB/Lynchburg Juvenile Detention Center
- Chesapeake CSB/Chesapeake Juvenile Justice Center
- Chesterfield CSB/Chesterfield Juvenile Detention Home
- Crossroads CSB/Piedmont Juvenile Detention Home
- Norfolk CSB/Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home
- Planning District One Behavioral Health/Highlands Juvenile Detention Home
- Richmond Behavioral Health/Richmond Juvenile Detention Home
- Valley CSB/Shenandoah Juvenile Justice Center

It is DMHMRSAS' belief that these programs serve to increase local system capacity to identify and intervene in the lives of children involved in the juvenile justice system.

Some highlights of the projects' current accomplishments include, but are not limited to:

- Psychiatric hospitalizations for children in juvenile detention centers have decreased over 50% in areas where a program exists, resulting in only 13 in-patient referrals being made for FY06 in the affected areas.
- In FY 06, over 700 community based referrals for services were made.
- During this calendar year, children in these programs have been provided: assessments, over 780 youth; individual counseling to 509 youth; group counseling to 538 youth; crisis intervention to 87 youth; and only 5 youth referred for inpatient services.
- With existing resources, DMHMRSAS projects that during the FY 07; over 2000 children will be served by these projects.

System of Care Demonstration Project Updates

Four CSBs are currently implementing evidence based practices within systems of care with support from the OCFS. The goal of these projects is to demonstrate the efficacy of evidence based practices in communities through out the Commonwealth to develop more seamless systems of care. The projects report quarterly progress and data to DMHMRSAS and collaborate regularly in technical assistance meetings with OCFS staff.

Current System of Care/Evidence-Based Practice Demonstration Projects:

1. Richmond Behavioral Health Authority (FY 2006, Multisystemic Therapy)
2. Planning District One (FY 2006, Functional Family Therapy)
3. Cumberland Mountain CSB (FY 2007, Functional Family Therapy)

4. Alexandria CSB (FY 2007, Functional Family Therapy)

Contact information for each project is posted on the Office of Child and Family Services webpage.

Virginia Federation of Families

DMHMRSAS continues to support the work of the Virginia Federation of Families (FOF) in providing resource coordination for individuals, training opportunities for parents and family members, and assisting with the efforts of the various support groups.

As always, the VA FOF has been very busy as they work to inform and empower families of children with special needs. VA FOF participates on a variety of state and local boards, commissions and workgroups advocating for children and families and they remain a positive force as we work to transform our current service delivery system.

For additional information on the VA FOF or parent involvement, please contact Ms. Vicki Hardy-Murrell, Director, VA Federation of Families at 1-877-264-8366 or via internet at www.vafof.org.

VA FOF is a non-profit corporation. Primary funding for VA FOF and VA-INFO is provided by the VA Department of MH/MR/SAS with federal Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) Block Grant funds. Donations are welcome.

Training and Conferences Attended

National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP)

The OCFS sent staff to participate in this training institute on October 14-16, 2006 held at the Holiday Inn in Pittsburgh, PA. This conference focused on the intersection between juvenile justice and mental health service provision and how programs can use alternative funding strategies to provide community based interventions for youth.

Virginia Juvenile Justice Association Annual Training Institute

The OCFS staff participated in the VJJA training institute held at the Sheraton Richmond West on November 1-3, 2006. This training opportunity afforded a wonderful environment to learn about

innovations in juvenile justice practices and how those innovations intersect with the provision of mental health treatment services for children in need.

National Prisoner Re-entry Conference

The OCFS staff participated in the National Prisoner Re-entry Summit held at the Hyatt Arlington on November 8-9, 2006. This training provided an opportunity to discuss strategies for providing services to youth and adults retuning into communities from secure environments. Topic included the importance of mental health service provision to persons re-entering communities as well as focusing on building system capacity to serve those involved with the justice system.

Upcoming Opportunities

Presentation on Children's Services to DMHMRSAS State Board

The State Board of DMHMRSAS has expressed interest in and asked for a presentation on services to children and families at its next meeting on December 8 in Fredericksburg. Janet Lung and Mary Ann Discenza will present to the board and provide information on all initiatives of the DMHMRSAS for children and their families. The Board has a particular interest in early intervention and autism.

5th Annual Creating Connections Conference: March 19-20, 2007 at the Hotel Roanoke

Plans are well underway for the 5th Annual Creating Connections conference. The conference will be held on March 19 and 20, 2007. This year's theme will be *Creating Connections: Strengthening Partnerships between Families and Providers*. Keynote speakers will be Dr. Serena Wieder and Ms. Kathy Hebbler.

System of Care Conference Planning

The Office of Child and Family Services continues to collaborate with the Virginia Commission on Youth to co-sponsor a conference, "Using Evidence Based Practices Within Systems of Care for Children", in 2007. A multi agency and stakeholder planning committee has met and preliminary recommendations for the conference will be presented to the Commission on Youth at its

November 28th meeting. More information will be provided as the planning moves forward.

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